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SENATE

{ REPORT
{ No. 1203

RESTORATION OF FORT McHENRY IN BALTIMORE, MD.

FEBRUARY 17 (calendar day, FEBRUARY 21), 1925.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. BRUCE, from the Committee on Military Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 5261]

The Committee on Military Affairs, to which was referred the bill (H. R. 5261) to provide for the restoration of Fort McHenry, in the State of Maryland, having considered the same, report favorably with the recommendation that the bill pass.

A letter from the Secretary of War with respect to this bill is as follows:

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington, February 19, 1925.

HON. JAMES W. WADSWORTH, Jr.,
Chairman Committee on Military Affairs,
United States Senate.

MY DEAR SENATOR WADSWORTH: Referring to H. R. 5261 (Union Calendar No. 305), "A bill to repeal and reenact chapter 100, 1914, Public, No. 108, to provide for the restoration of Fort McHenry, in the State of Maryland, and its permanent preservation as a national park and perpetual national memorial shrine as the birthplace of the immortal 'Star-Spangled Banner,' written by Francis Scott Key, for the appropriation of the necessary funds, and for other purposes." I have this date informed the chairman Committee on Military Affairs, House of Representatives, that the bill as amended is satisfactory from the viewpoint of the War Department.

However, your attention is invited to the fact that there appears to be no evidence that the sale of the temporary buildings and contents thereof mentioned in the last proviso of the bill will bring \$50,000, the amount appropriated for the restoration of Fort McHenry, or that this amount will be sufficient for the purpose contemplated in case it should be realized from such sale.

Your attention is also invited to the large number of projects for the creation of national monuments which are being initiated either by bills in Congress or by request to the Secretary of War. Under the act of June 8, 1906 (34 Stat. 225), which authorizes the President to declare historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest that are situated on Government lands to be national monuments, no particular officer or department of the Government is charged with the administration of these monuments and no appropriation is provided for their maintenance. It is suggested, for this reason, that Congress should appropriate sufficient funds for this purpose and at the same time designate some officer of the Government

as custodian for their preservation. National parks are not in this category, as specific appropriations are made each year for their maintenance and upkeep and a special commission is appointed which is charged with their care and custody. Furthermore, national parks are available for military maneuvers and encampments, while national monuments are usually of such a character that they can be used only for the purpose for which they are created.

Sincerely yours,

JOHN W. WEEKS, *Secretary of War.*

The Governor of Maryland has written to the chairman of the committee the following letter:

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,
Annapolis, Md., December 8, 1924.

Hon. JAMES W. WADSWORTH, Jr.,
Senate Office Building, Washington, D. C.

DEAR SIR: Fort McHenry, the birthplace of the Star-Spangled Banner, is in a desolate condition. Used during the World War as one of our principal military hospitals, it has now been evacuated and the abandoned frame buildings, with the accumulated rubbish, make it a fire hazard and menaces the fort itself, the Armistead Monument, the Francis Scott Key Monument, the emigration station, and other valuable Government property, as well as the city of Baltimore.

May I, as Governor of the State of Maryland, call your attention to the deplorable condition of this Government reservation, and ask your support of bill H. R. 5261, as introduced by Hon. J. Charles Linthicum, which bill provides for the rehabilitation of the fort to the condition in which it stood during the bombardment in the War of 1812; and which would make the grounds forever a national military reservation.

Very truly yours,

ALBERT C. RITCHIE, *Governor.*

Public-spirited citizens of Baltimore employed an engineer to make a thorough inspection of this property and a very careful estimate leads to the conclusion that the work necessary can be done for approximately \$50,000, and that this amount can be secured from salvaging the buildings and installations now standing on the property. Your committee believes that Fort McHenry should be retained as a memorial to the author of the Star-Spangled Banner.

